Irregularities in Allotment of P.C.O. in Darbhanga District of Bihar

†1255. SHRI RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the ability, qualifications and other characteristics of any person for opening a P.C.O.;

(b) whether any reference has been made in the newspapers in Bihar with regard to irregularities in allotting the P.C.O. in Darbhanga Telecom districts during September last; and

(c) if so, whether Government will take necessary action by setting up a high level enquiry committee in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) STD/ISD, PCOs are allotted to educated unemployed persons. The applicant should be of 18 years or above on the date of application. There shall not be any upper age limit. The educational qualification requirement for allotment shall be as under: at least matric or high school and above for urban area and 8th or middle pass and above for rural areas. No educational qualification is required in respect of handicapped including mentally handicapped and blind, Ex-servicemen, SC/ST and war-widows in urban or rural areas. Educational qualification is also not required where Charitable Institutions, Educational Institutions and Army establishments apply for STD PCOs. The war-widows/dependants, SC/ST, handicapped persons and ex-servicemen are given priority to the extent of 50% of the STD/ISD PCOs to be allotted.

(b) No such reference has been brought to our knowledge.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

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†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.